

**James Madison to George Washington, March 3, 1788. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.**

**TO GEORGE WASHINGTON. WASH. MSS.**

N. York, March 3d. 1788.

Dear Sir,

The Convention of N. Hampshire has afforded a very disagreeable subject of communication. It has not rejected the Constitution, but it has failed to adopt it. Contrary to all calculations that had been made it appeared on a meeting of the members that a majority of 3 or four was adverse to the object before them, and that on a final question on the merits, the decision would be in the negative. In this critical state of things, the federalists thought it best to attempt an adjournment, and having proselyted some of the members who were positively instructed agst. the Constitution, the attempt succeeded by a majority of 57 agst. 47, if my information as to the numbers be correct. It seems to be fully expected that some of the instructed members will prevail on their towns to unfetter them and that in the event N. Hampshire will be among the adopting States. The mischief elsewhere will, in the mean time be of a serious nature. The second meeting is to be in June. This circumstance will probably be construed in Virga. as making cotemporary arrangements with her. It is explained to me however as having reference merely to the conveniency of the members whose attendance at their annual elections & courts would not consist with an earlier period. The opposition I understand is composed precisely of

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the same description of characters with that of Massts., and stands contrasted to all the wealth, abilities, and respectability of the State.

I am preparing to set out for Orange,<sup>1</sup> and promise myself the pleasure of taking Mount Vernon in the way. Meantime

1 Alexander Hamilton to Madison, New York, April 3, 1788:

"I think however the principles we talked of, in respect to the legislative authorities, are not only just but will apply to the other departments. Nor will the consequences appear so disagreeable, as they may seem at first sight, when we attend to the true import of the rule established. The States *retain* all the authorities they were *before* possessed of not alienated in the three modes pointed out; but this does not include cases which are the *creatures* of the New Constitution. For instance, the crime of treason against the United States *immediately*, is a crime known only to the New Constitution. There *was* no power in the state constitution to pardon that crime—There will therefore be none under the new &c. This or something like it seems to me to afford the best solution of the difficulty.

"I send you the Federalist from the beginning to the conclusion of the commentary on the Executive branch. If our suspicions of the author be right, he must be too much engaged to make a rapid progress in what remains.

"—The Court of Chancery & a Circuit Court are now Sitting.

"We are told that your election has succeeded; with which we all felicitate ourselves. I will thank you for an account of the result generally.

"In this state our prospects are much as you left them—A moot point which Side will prevail. Our friends to the northward are active. I remain &c."— *Mad. MSS.*

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I remain, yours most respectfully & Affectly